Drought in States

*391. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRITHANGA TAMIL SELVAN:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several States of the country are facing severe drought situation due to failure of monsoon;

(b) if so, which are those States and the estimates regarding the percentage of land engulfed by drought in each of them;

(c) the estimate regarding the percentage of agriculture production affected by drought; and

(d) whether any action has been taken to combat the situation; if so, the details thereof; if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH) : (a) to (d) It is too early to refer to drought situation in States or Districts as the damage caused by long dry spell is being still assessed.

As per the report of the India Meteorological Department, however, the following is the number of districts with deficient (-20% to-59%) and scanty (-60% to -99%) rainfall in the States during current South-West Monsoon (1 -6-2002 to 31 -7-2002):-

S.No.	State	No. of Districts	
		Scanty	Deficient
1	Andhra Pradesh	4	15
2	Chhattisgarh	7	7
3	Gujarat	5	15
4	Haryana	16	3
5	Himachal Pradesh	6	6
6	Karnataka	0	21
7	Maharashtra	1	13
8	Madhya Pradesh	30	12
9	Orissa	2	22

S.No.	State	No. of Districts	
		Scanty	Deficient
10	Punjab	10	5
11	Rajasthan	27	5
12	Tamil Nadu	7	17
13	Uttar Pradesh	45	17

Preliminary estimates reveal that as on 1 st August, 2002 there was an approximate backlog of 25% in terms of area sown in all states put together.

States have drawn up their contingent plans for alternate crops and re-sowing and supply of Drinking Water and Fodder etc. Central Government Departments have geared up to offer supplementary assistance. Agriculture Minister has taken a Conference of Agriculture and Relief Ministers of the affected States. Both Central and State Governments are in a state of preparedness to deal with the situation.

Wells in Gir Forests

*392. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that, more than 12,000 wells in Gir Forests have turned to be death trap for lions and are endangering the lives of lions and other wild animals; and

(b) if so, the action taken to cover those wells?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIT.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Wells are dug by villagers in and around Gir Protected area to overcome the shortage of water during lean months. Most of these wells do not have parapet walls and as a result occasionally there have been reports of wild animals falling into such wells. Forest Department has constructed parapet walls around 505 open wells during the period from April, 1999 to July, 2002 to prevent such accidents.